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ABSTRACT

This report describes the implementation and results of six university programs, funded by the Knight Foundation, to recruit and retain students from underrepresented minority groups in the field of journalism. It reviews the objectives, background, implementation, and results of continuing programs at Florida A&M University, the University of Florida, the University of Missouri, the University of North Dakota, San Francisco State University (California), and Wayne State University (Michigan). It then examines the lessons learned from such programs, including effective recruiting strategies (emphasizing a personal approach, larger scholarships, profile selection, newsletters, summer programs, parent involvement, and recruiting on campus) and retention strategies (emphasizing an open door policy, tracking, emergency aid, support networks, job fairs, and internships). The report goes on to describe how universities and the media industry can help support effective minority journalism programs, and concludes that journalism programs must emphasize quality and professionalism in their programs and students to successfully recruit, retain, and place minority graduates. An appendix provides contact information for the six programs and two student search agencies. (MDM)

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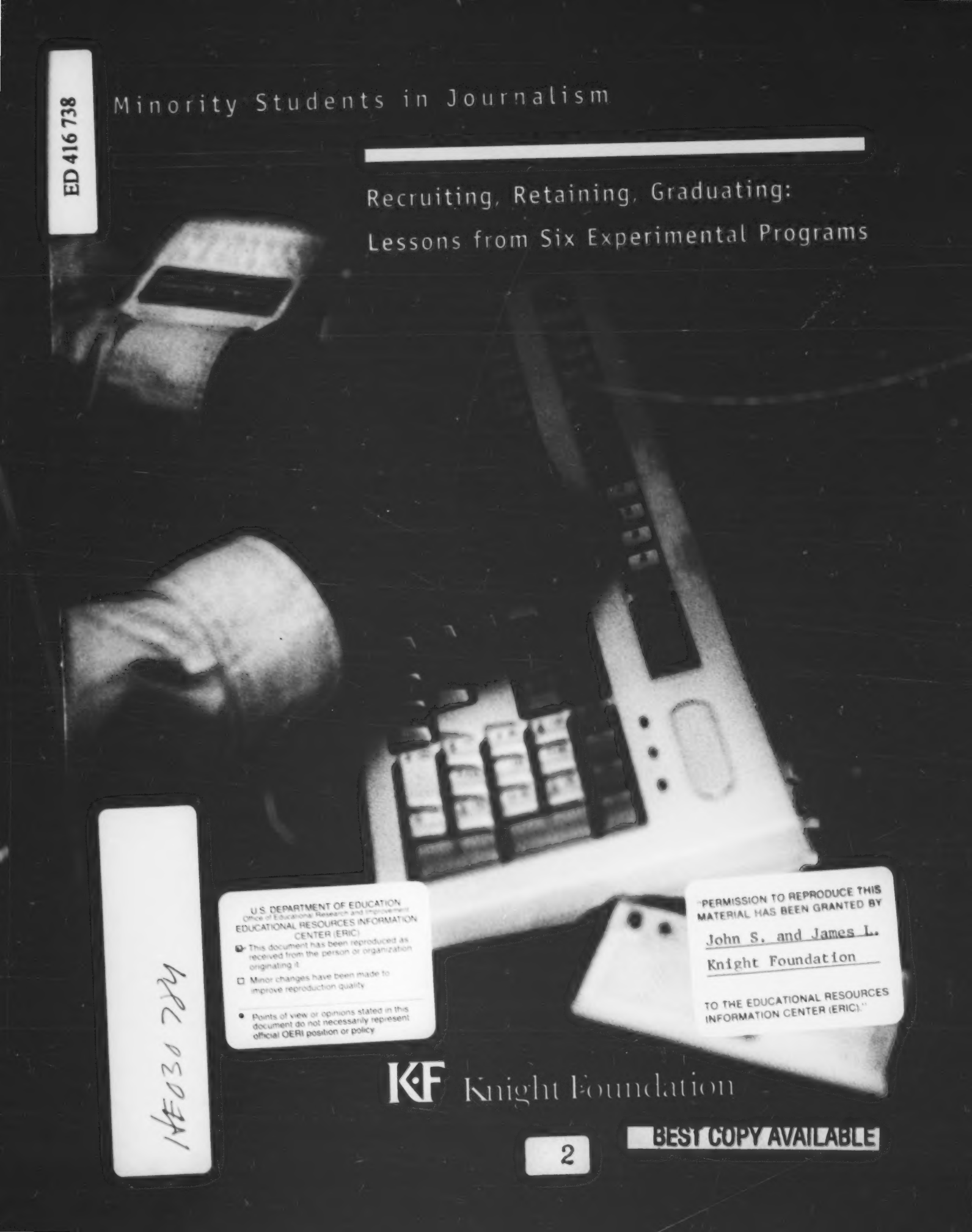
Minority Students in Journalism

Recruiting, Retaining, Graduating: Lessons from Six Experimental Programs



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Minority Students in Journalism

Recruiting, Retaining, Graduating:
Lessons from Six Experimental Programs

MF 030 784

K·F John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

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John S. and James L. Knight Foundation

Introduction

Minorities made up only 11.3 percent of the newsroom staffs of American dailies in 1996, a figure that all segments of the newspaper industry consider inadequate.

Robert J. Haiman, president emeritus of The Poynter Institute for Media Studies and a member of the Journalism Advisory Committee of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, called the situation "one of the major problems, perhaps THE major problem, facing the newspaper industry today."

In 1978, the first year in which the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) conducted such a survey, minorities constituted only 4 percent of daily newsroom staffs, and more than half of American dailies had no minorities in their newsrooms. In that same year, ASNE adopted a "Year 2000" program aimed at matching minority employment in newsrooms with the U.S. minority population in 22 years.

While there has been substantial progress, that goal remains elusive. As the nation approaches the turn of a new century, an estimated 25 percent of the population will be composed of minorities. In some American cities minorities will be the majority portion of the population and the term *minority* will begin to lose its significance. Despite those numbers, American newspapers have moved less than halfway toward the ASNE mark – and nearly half of the dailies surveyed, usually the smaller papers, still have no minority staff members.

Knight Foundation advisers and staff meet to discuss strategies to increase diversity in U.S. newsrooms.

The issues of race and ethnicity affect every aspect of American society. Newspapers and other media sit on the razor's edge of this issue, because they are the traditional "fourth branch of government" and at the same time a significant commercial enterprise in their communities. How can they guide others, through informed news and commentary, when they themselves have not achieved the goal of fair representation in their newsroom staffing and management teams?

Along with many others, Knight Foundation has long wrestled with this issue. We are well aware of the excellent efforts launched over the years by a variety of programs and organizations, including the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists, the Asian American Journalists Association and the Native American Journalists Association. They have done much to encourage progress.

Complementing those efforts, Knight Foundation has pursued solutions to bolstering minority representation by providing venture capital to various training programs at universities and within the industry. There's an easy explanation for that focus: Some 85 percent of all new newsroom employees for daily newspapers are graduated each year from university journalism programs. If a bachelor's degree has become a prerequisite for the entire pool of entry-level candidates, it must be so for minority employees as well. Such journalism programs, then, are the likeliest means of increasing newsroom diversity.

Recent Census Bureau figures indicate that this objective is achievable. Almost the same percentage of young African-Americans now hold high school diplomas as do young whites – 86.5 percent of blacks, 87.4 percent of whites,

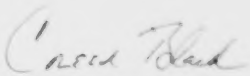
according to a 1995 Census survey. Although in 1994 only 51 percent of black high school graduates (and 49 percent of Hispanics) went directly to college compared to 65 percent of whites, this figure is still high enough to justify the hope for equal opportunity journalism education.

Knight Foundation's Journalism Program funded six experimental university programs from 1987 through 1996 – at Florida A&M University, the University of Florida, the University of Missouri, the University of North Dakota, San Francisco State University and Wayne State University – to encourage a variety of methods for attracting minority students to journalism education and preparing them for jobs in the news media. Each university designed a program that would take advantage of its own particular location, demographics and traditional sources of support. The experimental stage of most of these undertakings, begun in the late 1980s, is now complete, but the minority programs continue at all of the schools.

In funding these programs, Knight Foundation continued a tradition of supporting the education of current and future journalists that has totaled $58 million since 1990. In these diversity grants, the Foundation encouraged the schools to seek answers to these questions: Is there a substantial pool of qualified minority candidates for university education in journalism? If so, how can they best be recruited? What unique problems will they face as undergraduates? How can they best find jobs once they graduate? And what should be the role of news media and funders in this university process?

At minimum, the answers that are emerging have guided Knight Foundation's ongoing diversity grant making. We learned enough to believe that any successful diversity program includes a consistent program of student recruitment, a network of strong retention activities, a supportive placement program and consistent alumni contact. We considered the status of those elements in making new or follow-up diversity grants to the universities of Alabama, Penn State, Nevada-Reno, San Francisco State, San Jose State, North Dakota and Florida A&M. In addition, we have continued support for the Maynard Institute and ASNE's diversity program.

While this report on the six programs makes no attempt to be conclusive, you will find in it some answers to the questions we raised on recruitment, graduation and retention. In this constantly changing field, our document represents a snapshot of the six programs and their approaches. It is our hope that you will agree with Knight Foundation's conclusion that there are many different ways to achieve success in a minority program. An infusion of money isn't necessarily one of them. With a commitment of their own resources, and through collaboration with their local or regional communities, universities and the news media can develop diversity in the newsroom and change the face of news coverage in the 21st century.



Creed C. Black
President and CEO, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
July 1997

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Chapter 1: The Experience of Six Programs

FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY

Tallahassee, Fla.

Objectives: To attract academically talented minority students and enhance their education in journalism with a program that engenders professional development and self-confidence.

Background: FAMU's School of Journalism, Media and Graphic Arts is a predominantly black institution that draws about 80 percent of its enrollment from the state of Florida. It was the first historically black journalism program to be nationally accredited. The school has 350 undergraduate communications majors in the freshman through senior years; about 100 of these are print majors. In 1991 Knight Foundation awarded $1 million for a chair in journalism, which the state matched with an additional $750,000. The first and current holder of the Knight Chair in Journalism is Joseph E. Ritchie, former assistant foreign editor of the Washington Post and former national and foreign editor of the Detroit Free Press.

Implementation: FAMU agreed to pay 68 percent of the Knight Chair's salary and fringe benefits, leaving a significant portion of the endowment income to fund recruitment of top high school scholars and other various student improvement programs. These included:

Professor Joseph E. Ritchie, who holds the Knight Chair in Journalism at FAMU, works with senior journalism student Peter McKay.

- **Scholarships.** FAMU uses $45,000 to $57,000 from the endowment each year to fund scholarships for Knight Scholars, students who are majoring in print journalism. These scholarships range from $1,000 to $2,500. Much of the Knight scholarship money makes up a portion of larger, four-year scholarships awarded to outstanding high school seniors recruited intensively by the university. The journalism school itself gives a total of $160,000 a year in minority scholarships.
- **Professional Colloquiums.** Each year, professional journalists share with students their experiences in reporting and editing. Most of the speakers are minorities with significant professional experience. The speakers have also included international journalists.
- **Professional Development Workshops.** These one-day workshops, normally held on Saturdays, use visiting professionals to help intensify the students' professional awareness. The subjects have included a reporting deadline simulation, the visual impact of the newspaper page and politics of the newsroom.
- **Student Field Trips.** Knight Scholarship holders are taken outside of Tallahassee to see other reporting and editing environments. One year,

they made a five-day trip to Washington with Joseph Ritchie. They visited various news media, attended a seminar on health reporting and met with members of the Congressional Black Caucus.

- **Professional Meetings and Job Fairs.** Supplemental funds help FAMU students attend regional and national meetings of the Society of Professional Journalists and the National Association of Black Journalists. Selected students are also sent to association and newspaper job fairs.
- **Internships.** Special efforts are made to place students in internships throughout the nation. The Knight Chair works closely with advisers to FAMU's innovative internship program at the Tallahassee Democrat. Some 10 to 12 students each semester work 20 hours a week at the Democrat for pay and credit under the close supervision of a full-time professional, whose salary is paid by the Democrat.

Robert M. Ruggles, Florida A&M University:

"I think the overarching challenge for Florida A&M was to capture academic and professional respectability for the program, our students and our faculty. We have done that."

Results: FAMU's goal was not to attract more students, since it already had as many students as the faculty and facilities could handle. It has been successful in using the Knight scholarships to recruit potentially better students (the 13 Knight Scholars entering as freshmen in Fall 1996 had average GPAs of 3.9 and SAT scores of 1137). With the presence and mentoring of Knight Chair Joseph Ritchie, the students' professional development has been enriched.

Robert M. Ruggles, dean at FAMU, says the development program has produced graduates who are better prepared to enter the profession. "They have more self-confidence and better insight into the challenges they will face in the newsroom," he said. "I also give great credit to the effort of our faculty, who were encouraged by the level of university, foundation and professional support for the new programs."

Continuation of Program: Because the program was endowed, the overall student development project can look forward to continued success. The university has also shown its commitment by contributing most of the Knight Chair's salary from state money and allocating additional funds for a secretarial salary and office expenses. Thus, about $105,000 a year of the Knight Chair endowment income goes directly to scholarships and the various student enhancement programs described above.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

Gainesville, Fla.

Objectives: To recruit and graduate more black students in journalism and advertising.

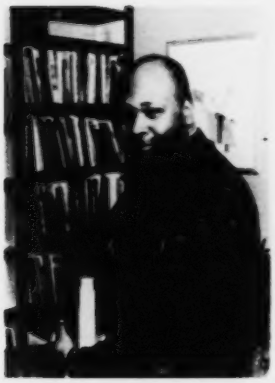
Background: The University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications has one of the nation's largest programs in journalism, with 1,500 undergraduates in the junior and senior years and 175 graduate students. Some 90 percent of the undergraduates are Floridians. About 15 percent of the population of Florida is black and about 15 percent Hispanic. Knight Foundation awarded $509,067 to Florida in 1987 for a five-year pilot program. The college was given the challenge of concentrating on African-American students during the five-year program, since attracting black reporters and advertising staff members was a major problem for the state's newspapers. Knight Foundation extended the program for two years in 1992 with a grant of $252,000 and at the same time gave the college $600,000 to endow a minority scholarship fund. The extended program served all minority students in the college majoring in journalism and advertising.

Implementation: The college used a wide number of tools to recruit and retain black students as majors in journalism and advertising:

- **Minority Program Office.** The college established a Minority Scholarship Program (MSP), with a full-time director, a secretary and a student editorial assistant. The MSP center became a meeting place for African-American students seeking internships, academic advising, financial aid or just a friendly ear. The MSP center sent groups of students to national and regional job fairs and promoted and scheduled on-campus recruiting. The center advised and tracked all black prejournalism students at UF and every black student admitted to the college. Students falling below a 2.5 GPA were contacted personally by the director, asked to come in for counseling and directed to the college's special tutorial program.
- **Scholarships.** About 20 percent of the Knight Award was allocated for scholarships: $3,000 each per year for selected students majoring in or planning to major in journalism and advertising. The college also made building an endowment for minority scholarships its highest priority in the university's five-year capital campaign. Nine newspaper corporations

and foundations gave a total of $1.4 million for endowed minority scholarship funds, to which the state of Florida added $700,000.

- **High School Contacts.** The MSP director visited high schools throughout the state, spoke to minority students and distributed literature about the college, including Colors, the MSP newsletter published twice a year. The newsletter, produced by black students, highlighted activities of minority students in the college, the success of black graduates and opportunities at the college and in the mass media. Students also produced a video about minority activities at the college. The director recruited heavily each year at the Florida Scholastic Press Association convention in Orlando, attended by more than 1,000 high school journalists, including many minorities. A majority of the state's dailies provided one or more paid registrations and travel expenses for minority students in their cities to attend the college's one-week summer high school workshop on the UF campus.
- **Community College and University Recruiting.** Since the college admits students at the junior level only, the MSP director mined two other rich lodes of potential students – black students at the state's 28 community colleges and black sophomores on the University of Florida campus still uncommitted to a major. These students had already proven themselves academically and were a good bet to graduate if offered scholarships and a solid professional goal. The MSP director attended the annual conventions of the Florida Community College Press Association and made special presentations to interested students.
- **Visitation Program.** The MSP instituted a visitation weekend twice each year which became one of the most successful recruiting tools. From 20 to 30 African-American students, along with their parents (and frequently siblings), came to the University of Florida campus during the weekend as guests of the college. About 60 percent were high school seniors and 40 percent second-year community college students. The MSP paid for travel expenses, overnight accommodations and meals.
- **Student Organization.** The MSP encouraged the establishment of the Association of Black Communicators (ABC). With more than 100 black prejournalism and college communication majors, this group became a key element in recruitment, retention and peer support. ABC organized an annual Media Conference that brought in black professionals to speak about job opportunities in the media. ABC members recruited among their friends on the campus. The MSP and the ABC together networked with the National Association of Black Journalists, the



Charles J. Harris Jr., University of Florida:

"The greatest challenge I faced was the task of convincing non-minority students, faculty and staff of the importance and need for diversity, and why we had programs to accomplish that end. At first, there were few faculty members who would give me feedback on minority students. As the program grew and we were able to show success, more and more of my colleagues began to stop by and refer students. White students became comfortable with our efforts and actually supported us. I feel we showed diversity can work and help everyone, including white students."

Professor John Freeman, at rear, works with students in the Introduction to Photojournalism class reviewing photo negatives. They include Danielle Bradley, foreground left, a print journalism junior, and Nathalie Cadet, right, a public relations junior.

Jacksonville Association of Black Communicators and the Central Florida Association of Black Journalists and Broadcasters, all of which took a special interest in recruiting for the Florida program and finding internships and jobs for its students.

- **Outside Advisers.** The MSP asked one minority editor or reporter to serve as an adviser each year. The adviser made at least two trips each year to the campus, spending two days meeting with students, examining all aspects of the program, then discussing problems, progress and suggested changes with the MSP staff and college administrators.
- **Minority Faculty**. The college made a more deliberate effort to recruit minority faculty, believing that they provided a higher comfort level and necessary role models for the growing minority enrollment in the school.

Results: At the end of the five-year period, the University of Florida had achieved the following: The number of black students majoring in journalism and advertising had increased by 166 percent, from 18 to 48; the number graduating each year had increased from 5 to 27. At the beginning of the pilot period, minority students were graduating at only two-thirds the rate of nonminorities; at the end, they were graduating at the same rate. Minority faculty increased from three (6 percent of all faculty) in 1987 to eight (15 percent) in 1996. Two of the four college department chairs in 1996 were African-American.

Charles J. Harris Jr., MSP director for seven years, said, "A successful minority recruitment and retention program must have a high collegewide priority, and it must have a collegewide commitment by faculty and staff. As a college, we achieved these goals. A large percentage of our students graduated and went into the journalism and advertising professions. But many didn't stay there. This is a problem that the media needs to address."

Continuation of Program. Because of successful fund-raising for minority scholarships in the initial five-year period, the program was opened to all minority students in 1992. The University of Florida agreed to fully fund the two positions in the MSP when the Knight extension award ended. With a minority scholarship endowment of $2.1 million, the college now awards more than $100,000 in financial aid to minorities each year. In 1996 the college had 267 minority undergraduates, 20 percent of the total enrollment. With strong university support and the permanent scholarship endowment, the college's minority program is now completely self-sustaining.

University of Missouri

Columbia, Mo.

Objectives: To recruit intensively at the high school level in large metropolitan centers and enroll and graduate larger numbers of minority students in all disciplines taught at the school, including print journalism, photojournalism, advertising and broadcast journalism.

Background: Founded in 1908, the University of Missouri School of Journalism is the oldest in the nation. It enrolls about 550 undergraduates, junior through senior years, and 250 graduate students. Missouri has a deserved reputation as a major "national" school of journalism, attracting students from throughout the United States. The school also had 15 years of experience with the Dow Jones Newspaper Fund in conducting two-week summer workshops for high school minority students. The state's population is 11 percent black, 1.3 percent Hispanic and 1.1 percent Asian-American. In 1987, Knight Foundation funded a five-year program with a grant of $541,000. A two-year grant to Missouri of $187,000 extended the program in 1992.

Implementation: The Missouri effort was aimed primarily at recruiting at the high school level and retention at the freshman–sophomore level (students are not admitted to the School of Journalism until the junior year). Missouri believed retention would be much easier at the junior–senior level if freshman admission numbers could be improved and those same students could meet the rigorous standards for admission into the school itself. For automatic admission to the school in their third year, students must achieve the following in their first two years: a 3.0 GPA and grades of C or better in basic news writing and a course called "Principles of American Journalism."

The school initiated the following processes:

- **Minority Program Office.** Using the Knight grant, the School of Journalism established an Office of Minority Recruitment and Retention (OMR&R). It had a full-time director, secretary and student workers. The OMR&R developed and implemented a comprehensive public relations campaign, including direct mail, a promotional videotape, a recruiting packet, advertisements in targeted publications and four-color brochures and posters. The office also developed the Journalism Self-Efficacy Scale as a tool for measuring the students' interest, desire and confidence in performing journalism-related tasks and activities. The scale was administered to incoming freshmen to uncover strengths and weaknesses that could be addressed in their first year.
- **Scholarships.** Scholarships of $250 were awarded to 30 to 40 prejournalism students called Knight Scholars. Mostly, these were supplements to much larger university scholarships. Knight Scholars who were eventually

admitted to the School of Journalism at the junior year were then eligible for other existing scholarships at the university and in the school.

- **High School Contacts.** Although the state's overall black population is 11 percent, much of it is concentrated in its two largest cities (the population of St. Louis is almost 50 percent black, while Kansas City is about 30 percent black). Kansas City also has a 4.7 percent Hispanic population. The OMR&R director therefore identified all high schools in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas with combined minority enrollments of 10 percent or higher. The director visited journalism teachers, journalism classes and school counselors at their schools. Other teachers were contacted when they visited the Missouri campus in Columbia in the summer for a high school journalism teachers' workshop. Those teachers attended a special session aimed at familiarizing them with minority sensitivity, methods of identifying students with exceptional writing skills and the scholarship and academic offerings of the Missouri journalism program. Missouri encouraged high school students with whom it was in contact to attend NABJ weekend workshops in Kansas City and St. Louis. From among many of these same students, the school selected attendees for an 11-day summer workshop in journalism each year. Students attending the workshops became prime candidates for Knight Scholarships at the University of Missouri.
- **Publications.** Some 2,000 copies of Dateline, produced quarterly by the OMR&R, were sent to all high schools in the St. Louis and Kansas City areas with more than 10 percent minority enrollments, plus other high schools in Chicago and other states where the director had made personal contact. It featured minority journalism students, minority news practitioners, minority faculty and the educational opportunities at the University of Missouri.
- **Advising.** In addition to advising students individually, the OMR&R held a group orientation for all prejournalism students every fall and monitored all Knight Scholar grades at midterm and at term's end. Students with GPAs below 2.5 were required to come in for personal counseling sessions. Minority students already in the School of Journalism volunteered to serve as peer advisers to each of the Knight Scholars.
- **Internships.** The OMR&R arranged internships for the prejournalism students. Normally, only upper-level students already in the School of Journalism were encouraged to hold internships.
- **Minority Association.** The OMR&R organized a Multicultural Journalism Association (MCJA) for upper-level students. The organization allowed

Renee Chou, a senior broadcast journalism major at Missouri, practices her shooting technique.

for mutual support in the academic, professional and social needs of minority students. Most of the peer advisers to prejournalism students also came from this group.

- **Professional Conferences.** Selected students received financial aid to attend African-American, Hispanic, Asian-American and Native-American professional organization meetings.

Results: By 1993, minority prejournalism enrollment increased 62 percent, from the 53 students in 1987 to 139. Retention of prejournalism students increased 10 percent. In the same period, 1987–1993, minority enrollment within the school itself increased 145 percent, from 4.6 percent of enrollment (29 students) to 12.4 percent (71 students). In 1988, at the beginning of the program, Missouri had graduated only 11 minority students in a class of 301; by 1994, it was graduating 47. Minority graduates received jobs in media, advertising agencies, public relations firms and corporations throughout the state and nation.

Dr. Gail Baker Woods, director of the OMR&R from 1988 to 1991, said, "The minority recruiting program at Missouri was a tremendous learning experience for the faculty. First, we were forced to acknowledge that we were not doing an adequate job in providing our industry with diversity graduates. We also had to examine our curriculum, the environment in which we taught and even our personal agendas. Doing so helped to strengthen our entire program."

Gail Baker Woods, formerly of the University of Missouri:

"My greatest challenge was making journalism a reality for minority students — helping create an identity for a profession with which they had so little contact. Many didn't understand why journalism was important. They didn't know the contributions they could make to their own communities by becoming journalists. Some minority students viewed a career in journalism as an unattainable goal — well beyond their reach. It was my job to create awareness and generate excitement while still being honest about opportunities and limitations in the field. It was an extremely fine line to walk."

Continuation of Program: Although outside funding for the program ended in 1994, Missouri demonstrated that a focused effort with high school and prejournalism students can pay large dividends in eventual journalism school enrollment. Missouri maintains the OMR&R within the School of Journalism with part-time help. Many of the functions once exercised by the OMR&R are now the responsibility of a campuswide office called Academic Retention Services, which has several advisers specifically assigned to prejournalism and journalism minority students. Two years after outside funding ended, journalism minority enrollment was down about 10 percent. This probably can be attributed to the phasing out of the Dateline publication and the reduced off-campus recruiting activities. Even so, both the number and percentages of minority students in prejournalism and journalism in 1996 were still more than double those prior to the program's inception in 1987.

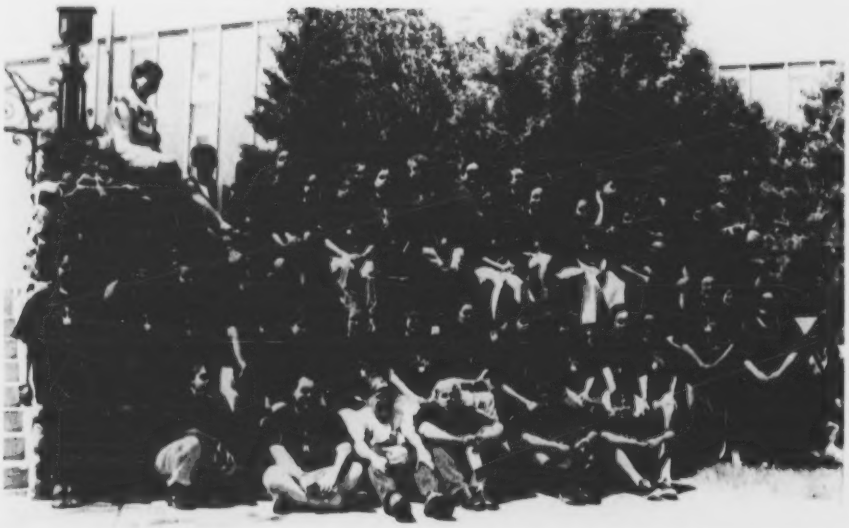
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Grand Forks, N.D.

Objectives: To recruit and prepare Native Americans in North Dakota and Native people from Canada for careers in journalism.

Background: The University of North Dakota School of Communication enrolls 400 undergraduates at the junior and senior level and 25 graduate students. About 4 percent of the population of the state of North Dakota is Native American, a minority group that is greatly underrepresented both in journalism education and the communications media. Knight Foundation awarded North Dakota a three-year grant of $108,355 in 1992 to start an "Indians into Journalism Initiative," and in 1996 another four-year grant of $111,900 to pursue its Native American high school workshop program.

Implementation: The "Indians into Journalism Initiative" was aimed not only at recruiting high school students for college journalism, but making a wide segment of the Native population of North Dakota and contiguous areas of Canada aware of career possibilities in the media:



Native Youth Media Institute participants pose on the University of North Dakota campus in June 1996.

- **Minority Program Office.** The Native Media Center (NMC), currently staffed by a half-time director and two student assistants, was established at the School of Communication in 1994. The center has three computers for student use and subscribes to tribal newspapers. It serves students as a place of study, advising, leisure reading and companionship.
- **High School Contacts.** The NMC each year conducts a Native Youth Media Institute, a one-week workshop that brings about 25 junior high school and high school students to campus for instruction in journalism, leadership, self-esteem and Native spirituality. The students produce a newspaper, a TV documentary and a radio program. The center director also visits high schools in the state that have significant Native American enrollments. In addition, the director attends the annual career fairs at North Dakota's four reservations, handing out literature about the university's journalism program and speaking about careers in journalism.

- **Community College Contacts.** Some 10 to 15 students from two-year tribal colleges attend an annual one-day workshop at the NMC. All the tribal colleges have a representative on a center advisory group that meets twice a year to plan ways of promoting journalism education on the reservations.
- **Publications.** Under the direction of the School of Communication, students each semester produce a magazine called Native Directions. Copies of the magazine are also used for recruitment and retention purposes.
- **Associations.** The Native Media Center works closely with the Native American Journalists Association on matters of common concern, including internships and the image and representation of Native Americans in the press.

Lucy Ganje, University of North Dakota:
"We had to overcome the skepticism of many Native youths toward journalism, and then seek out our own journalistic path for Native community news."

Results: Although the number of Native Americans enrolled in the School of Communication is low (ranging from five to 10 over the last four years), the school counts these successes: a permanent facility, the Native Media Center; two recent graduates of the program who were editors of tribal newspapers; former high school workshop students who have actually started newspapers on their reservations; and an increasing sense of professionalism, reflected in numerous awards won by high school and college students in national writing and broadcasting competitions.

Lucy Ganje, director of the center for its first three years and now its faculty adviser, said, "What is different about us is that we are creating journalism within a cultural context. An essential part of that is an acknowledgment of the spiritual aspect of Native communities. The major success of our program is that it has given Native people a voice."

Continuation of Program: Knight Foundation's 1996 grant will support the Native Youth Media Institute (the high school workshop) for another four years. The university has committed $15,000 a year to keep the Native Media Center open, with at least student assistant help. Student government supports the publication of Native Directions. Without other outside funding, however, the center will have to cut back on its outreach (other than the workshop) to high schools and reservations. The program, and the university, are concentrating on recovering from the epic spring floods of 1997 that inundated 75 percent of Grand Forks.

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San Francisco State University

San Francisco, Calif.

Objectives: To recruit and prepare minorities for careers in print journalism and photojournalism.

Background: The San Francisco State University Journalism Department enrolls about 350 undergraduates in the freshman through senior years. Broadcast journalism, public relations and advertising are taught by other campus departments. The school serves a San Francisco Bay area in which more than 40 percent of the population is comprised of racial and ethnic minorities. This includes 16 percent Asian-American, 15.5 percent Hispanic and 9.5 percent African-American. Knight Foundation gave the program a three-year award of $150,000 in 1990, and two three-year continuation awards, $180,000 in 1993 and $210,000 in 1996. The program has also received significant grants from the Ford Foundation, The Freedom Forum and local media and corporations.

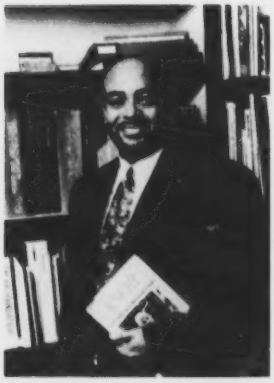
Implementation: Recruiting high school and community college minority students is a major thrust of the San Francisco State program. For majors, the school directs its main effort toward developing journalistic skills and a sensitivity to the needs for a diverse news media and fair and balanced coverage of all people in a diverse society. Helping achieve these goals were:

Somchith Sipamouane, left, a Bay Area Multicultural Media Academy photojournalism student, gets caption information from Yvonne Davis during the second annual Thousand Man March at the Capitol building in Sacramento on June 21, 1997.

- **Program Office.** The Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism (CIIJ) was established in 1990 and now has a full-time director, a full-time project coordinator and three student assistants.
- **High School Recruitment.** The center sponsors an annual one-day high school journalism conference, with featured speakers from the professions and six practical workshops. These conferences typically attract more than 100 students. The CIIJ also conducts an intensive two-week summer workshop called the Bay Area Multicultural Media Academy (BAMMA). The academy's 15 minority students live on campus during the period and produce the only newspaper circulated at SFSU during the summer. The center has twice hosted the Rainbow Institute, a three-week summer workshop bringing together students from throughout the United States. In 1996 the CIIJ set up an experimental mentors program for six Bay Area high schools in which a professional journalist volunteers to help in the production of the school publication, critique the publication and advise students about careers in journalism. Also in 1996, the center conducted a one-week training workshop for 14 high school journalism advisers. The center maintains a database of 165 Bay Area high schools and more than 75 community organizations that

work with youths. CIIJ presentations and numerous mailings advise these schools and organizations about scholarships and opportunities in journalism at San Francisco State.

- **Diversity Courses.** Concerns regarding diversity are included in many courses within the department. However, the department requires all majors to take a course entitled "Ethnic Diversity and U.S. Journalism."
- **Student Development.** Typically, 60 writing coaches and 35 photojournalism coaches from the professions volunteer each semester to meet one hour a week with students to tutor them on professional skills. In addition, mentors from the professions agree to meet with students several times during each semester to advise them on career preparation.
- **Internships.** The center maintains a computer database of 450 internship locations where students have been accepted in the past or might be accepted in the future.
- **Placement.** The center sponsors an annual Journalism Job Networking Fair, attended by recruiters from news media throughout the United States. The center also conducts resumé writing and other workshops, sends minority students to job fairs in other cities and coordinates individual recruiter visits to campus.



Iván Román, San Francisco State University:

"The greatest challenge for us has always been doing so much and expanding our services to students while on an extremely tight budget. The challenge for us now is tracking student progress more efficiently and documenting why our programs and services have been successful at retaining students, recruiting new students from high schools and expanding their options in such a quickly changing industry. By doing a more scientific and less anecdotal tracking and evaluation, we can develop related curriculum and export successful model programs to other colleges and universities."

Results: Minorities now constitute 45 percent of the department's enrollment, compared to 30 percent the year before the program began. The graduation rate has also risen dramatically. SFSU now graduates about 20 minority students a year (32 percent of all journalism graduates), compared to an average of 10 a year before the program began.

Iván Román, director of the CIIJ, said, "There is a high demand for our graduates – a credit to our emphasis on print journalism and photojournalism. As a result of our program, I believe all of our students, minority and nonminority, graduate with a better understanding of society's need for diversity, which can only make all of them better journalists."

Continuation of Program: The CIIJ has a $200,000 annual operating budget, totally dependent on short-range funding from outside sources. Whether San Francisco State would maintain the numbers of minority students and their excellent level of professional training without funding is uncertain. San Francisco State now has a $50,000 strategic funding grant from the Ford Foundation to plan a long-range funding strategy.

Wayne State University

Detroit, Mich.

Objectives: To seek outstanding minority high school graduates and undergraduate students from the Detroit area and give them a quality journalism education and intensive professional experience during their college careers.

Background: Wayne State University's Department of Communication advises 800 students in the four undergraduate years and 225 graduate students. The university student population is diverse in age and background: 34 percent are minorities; the median age is 28.8 years and 75 percent of the students work while attending school. Wayne State serves a metropolitan area in which more than half the population is African-American. Arab-Americans and Hispanics are also significant minorities. Between 1985 and 1989, Knight Foundation awarded the Journalism Institute for Minorities three grants totaling $151,000. The institute also receives financial support from Wayne State University, other foundations, corporations, individuals, local and national media and professional associations.

Former Director Ruth Seymour, third from left, poses with Journalism Institute for Minorities students at Wayne State.

Implementation: The institute enrolls 40 media communication majors on full tuition scholarships, and gives those students intensive professional experience and one-on-one mentoring during their college years:

- **Minority Program Office.** The Journalism Institute for Minorities was established in 1985 with one full-time staff member, its director. All three directors in the institute's first 11 years have been veteran Detroit newspersons.
- **Scholarships.** The institute awards 10 new scholarships each year, or a total of 40 scholarships at $3,000 per student, per year. Applicants must have at least a 3.0 GPA and demonstrate community involvement and a commitment to working in the media. Institute students range in age from 18 to 56. Although most of the 10 new scholarships go to recent high school graduates, some are awarded to students already in college.
- **High School Contacts.** The institute engages each year in a broad-based effort to get high school students interested in and excited about college and journalism. It co-sponsors with the Detroit Free Press a one-week high school workshop each summer that brings 15 minority students to the Wayne State campus. Along with the workshop, the institute director speaks at high school career days, visits journalism classes, advises teachers on publication problems and distributes institute literature to potential candidates. Institute students and graduates frequently help with recruiting.

Michele Vernon-Chesley, formerly of Wayne State University:

"One challenge is in dealing with the anger or hostility white students have toward the program and scholarship recipients. I think some people believe it's cool to be insensitive, even racist, these days, and students are no different. Perhaps it's indicative of an attitude in the news industry itself, and shows the need for programs or other vehicles to get people of color into the newsrooms, not only as reporters, but as editors, publishers and decision-makers."

- **Community College Contacts.** The institute recruits actively at the numerous community colleges in the Detroit area, and participates in the annual Community College Fair, a journalism career gathering sponsored by Michigan community colleges.
- **Student Development.** Professional development workshops bring working journalists to Wayne State to discuss a variety of issues. The director and graduates of the institute mentor students on a one-on-one basis. Grades are examined at the end of each semester, and intensive counseling is directed at students whose GPAs drop below 2.5. The institute holds an annual weekend retreat each October. The gathering brings current students and graduates of the program together at a campsite for discussions ranging from professional development to race in the newsroom.
- **Internships.** In accord with the central element of the program, all students must participate in internships every academic year. Thus, there typically are 40 internships each semester, including positions at the Detroit News and Detroit Free Press, smaller newspapers in the Detroit area, TV and radio stations, and public relations and advertising agencies. Institute students may take an internship at the Wayne State daily newspaper, the South End, but only during their freshman year.

Results: Institute students maintain a collective GPA above 3.0. The program moves a steady stream of well-trained, professionally motivated minority journalists into media each year. About 70 students have graduated from the program, and 90 percent of those are working in the media, teaching or pursuing advanced degrees.

Michele Vernon-Chesley, who directed the Journalism Institute for Minorities through February 1997, said, "If this industry is serious about diversity, it needs to get serious about journalism education. I think ours is a model program that other universities and media outlets could copy. It is tried and true."

Continuation of Program: The institute receives excellent support from the university, which pays the salary of the director and provides office space and expenses. The major factor in the budget is the $120,000 in annual scholarships, which must come from outside sources. As long as foundations, corporations, associations and local and national media offer financial support – or permanent funding is developed – the institute should be a continued success.

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Chapter 2: Lessons Learned

Although all six schools adopted different strategies, they had a number of common experiences that should be of benefit to universities, news media and funders in any future efforts.

1. Recruiting Strategies

There is no single formula for success in minority recruiting. A predominantly minority college that accepts students as freshmen might enlist a completely different set of tactics than a predominantly white school that admits students only at the junior year. These stand out as some of the most successful and least successful strategies:

What Works Best:

1. **Personal Approach.** All directors of the six experimental programs agree that the personal approach is the most successful recruiting device. One must attempt to meet the students individually in their high school journalism classes, at career days and at workshops, then follow up those meetings with individually addressed letters.

Andrea Miller, a senior at the University of Florida, makes notes during an interview in her public relations class.

2. **Large Scholarships.** Minority students usually need major financial aid. Significant scholarships for journalism majors attract high quality students who have either already shown some interest in communications or are uncommitted about their professional future.
3. **Profile Selection.** To obtain a list of high school minority students who fit a particular profile, journalism programs can contact the Student Search Service in Princeton, N.J., or the Educational Opportunities Service in Iowa City, Iowa. Each charges in the neighborhood of $200 for an initial set-up, and then about 20 cents for each name provided. The journalism program can specify criteria such as SAT or ACT range, geographic area, intended major and race or ethnicity. For details, see Appendix on page 28.
4. **Newsletters.** Newsletters that describe the program in an attractive fashion are effective if they: (a) are mailed selectively either to minority students or schools with high minority enrollment; (b) contain a card that students can fill out and mail to the program for more information; and (c) are followed up with a personal letter from the program director.
5. **Summer Programs.** A summer program involving relatively few high school students in a journalism project on the college campus is a high-

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percentage recruitment tool. These students can get individual attention and a realistic view of the campus and the journalism profession.

6. **Parent Involvement.** Recruiters should think about ways of bringing potential high school and community college students for a visit to the campus with their parents. Parents play an especially important role when younger students decide on their educational future.
7. **Recruiting on Campus.** College recruiters travel long distances to find potential majors when the most concentrated group of likely students is probably right on campus. Students who have completed their freshman or sophomore year might well be looking for a permanent home and a scholarship leading to a professional future in journalism.
8. **Recruiting at Community Colleges.** Community college students have proven their ability to get through the first two years of academic studies, and are looking for a place to complete their education. If they have shown some interest in community college media or journalism courses, they are prime candidates for transfer.
9. **Involving Student Organizations.** If there is a minority student association, its members can be invaluable in recruiting students on campus or in their old high schools. They probably are enthusiastic already about their major and future professional field. Colleges that don't have a minority student association should think about starting one.

What is Less Successful:

1. **Spreading Too Broad a Net.** Recruiting time and effort are finite. Visiting too many high schools and sending out too many brochures and letters dissipates both the effort of the recruiter and the funds for getting the job done. The recruiter must spend time and money on those places where there is a high potential return.
2. **Delegating the Recruiting Task.** College recruiters should not expect those who have other primary tasks to do a good surrogate recruiting job. Newspapers have to meet the daily deadline, high school counselors need to work with problem students and community center directors must concentrate on today's program. They can play a role in the recruiting process, but do not expect them to make it a high priority.
3. **Centralized Scholarships.** Some foundations, newspapers and journalistic organizations distribute scholarships on a national or statewide basis directly to student applicants. These scholarships are of little use in the recruiting process, although they can help with student retention. Scholarships that the recruiter can offer to a student on an annual, yet renewable, basis are much more valuable for recruiting purposes.
4. **Taking a Chance on Marginal Students.** College is tough and scholarships are sparse. Students who can't hack it in high school or community college will rarely make it at a major university, even if they have shown an interest in communications. It's better to devote the scholarships and advising

time to good students unless there are very unusual circumstances surrounding the specific student's poor academic performance.

5. **Impersonal Avalanche.** Throwing money at the recruiting process does not work. Sending out thousands of brochures in an impersonal fashion, even while using the best methods of the advertising business, will have a very low rate of return. There is no substitute for the personal approach.

2. Retention Strategies

Successfully recruiting students is only half the battle. The other half is retaining the student through four years of college and graduating him or her as a future professional journalist. These are some the retention methods that worked best and least at the six experimental programs:

Standing is Miki Turner, editor in chief of the Bay Area Multicultural Media Academy at San Francisco State, at an orientation with students and parents.

What Works Best:

1. Open Door Policy. The minority program director and assistants must be available for individual and frequent chats with students. These discussions can range from personal to financial to academic. Many minority students are in a new and uncertain environment. They need an adult anchor.

2. Tracking. Each student must be tracked in an organized fashion so the minority director can spot the earliest signs of problems. In the Missouri program, students' academic progress was checked twice a semester, once at midterm and again at semester's end.

3. Emergency Aid. More often than not, minority students come onto the university campus with few financial resources. They are more likely to drop out of school because of financial problems than they are from academic problems. Frequently, the financial pinch is of a temporary or emergency nature. Schools should look into the possibility of establishing a loan or grant fund from which small sums of money can be quickly transferred to the minority student.

4. **Support Network.** The retention process works best when there is an established circle of support from peers and role models. Students should be encouraged to participate in minority student professional organizations, and the organizations should be directed to render personal aid as a regular activity. Minority professionals can be recruited for one-on-one mentoring and tutorial help.

5. **Job Fairs and Conventions.** Funds should be sought or made available for travel to job fairs and professional conventions. Minority students need to see that good jobs and a chance for professional advancement await them upon graduation.
6. **Internships.** Good internships during the summer or as part of the regular academic year serve three purposes: (a) a source of supplementary income; (b) experience that will help the student in professional courses; and (c) a pragmatic view of the profession of journalism.

What is Less Successful:

1. **Benign Neglect.** Treating minority students like "every other student" once they have been admitted ignores the special problems that the average minority student will face in adjusting to the university campus and maintaining financial and social equilibrium.
2. **Isolating the Minority Program.** While it is good to delegate authority to the minority director, the minority center should not be so autonomous that it is isolated from the regular academic program. Administrators must maintain close contact with the minority director so academic and financial problems encountered can be quickly solved. The minority director and the students themselves must feel that the administration is actively involved in their activities and welfare. Ideally, the minority director should be responsible directly to the dean or department chair.
3. **Trying to Convert the Uninterested.** Students who have financial and academic needs can be helped. Students who have no interest in journalism or who develop an antipathy to it become a waste of counseling time. They can rarely be converted, and the adviser's time is better spent on other students.
4. **Centralizing the Process.** Just as national scholarships are of little help to the local recruiter, minority programs that are centralized on the university campus are not as successful as those localized in the journalism school or department. Academic and financial problems need quick attention, and, usually, swift communication between the school administrator and the minority adviser. Bureaucracy increases, speed diminishes and communication vanishes when the problem-solving process becomes centralized.

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Chapter 3: Next Steps

1. Universities Must Commit Resources

Minority recruitment and retention require a major effort by a university. Successful programs must have the combined support of the university and school administration, the minority director and the school's faculty. The university must give more than moral support to this effort. It must provide adequate space, services and financial sustenance. The college or department administration, preferably the top person, must be concerned and actively involved. The minority adviser must be energetic and compassionate; he or she must truly care about whether minority students succeed. And the faculty must be acutely aware that the success of the overall program is largely related to how they deal with the individual minority student in the classroom and instructor's office.

2. How The Industry Can Help

Recruiting minority students and seeing that they complete college successfully is the job of university administrators, teachers and advisers. However, there are ways that the industry can be very supportive of this process:

1. **Supporting Journalism Education.** About 85 percent of the new hires in newsrooms each year come from university journalism programs. It's logical to assume, then, that this is the major potential source for college-educated minority employees. Supporting journalism education, not just with money but with words and acts of encouragement, is one way to ensure that the best students will seek this field of study.
2. **Providing Reliable, Consistent Aid.** The ideal is endowed scholarships for selected journalism programs, so the aid will be there permanently. Where that resource isn't available, news organizations should make long-range commitments – say, for at least four years – for annual scholarships. School administrators can attract the best students by promising them long-term scholarships, with renewal based on good grades and a continued interest in journalism.
3. **Establishing Meaningful Internships.** Nothing integrates students into professional journalism like a paid internship, one that makes the student a fledgling reporter or editor, not a glorified clerk. Making a long-range agreement with one or more journalism programs for specific internships will provide a permanent bond between the newspaper and the school, and help the school retain minority students. High school minority internships are also an excellent way of attracting students into the profession. The best of these students can then be recommended for admission to college programs.

Chapter 4: Conclusions

If the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation's decade-long experience with university minority programs has shown one thing, it is that an abundance of bright, interested minority students in the nation's high schools are available to fill the positions ultimately waiting for them in the news media. Several observers have remarked that if universities recruited this talent with the same vigor they put into recruiting high school athletes, America's journalism schools would have a full complement of minority students. Good recruiting alone, however, is not enough. Knight Foundation has found that journalism programs must have two other identifying features for the successful retention and graduation of these recruits:

- **Quality.** Minority students and the media that hire them deserve educational standards of the highest quality. Not all good journalism programs seek accreditation of the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communications (ACEJMC), but most do. If a school does not have the ACEJMC seal of approval, an outside funding source should ask why. The six programs described in this handbook succeeded in large part because they already had solid programs in the basics – reporting, editing and graphics among them. They applied their standards rigorously and produced students who could perform effectively in their internships and first jobs in the mass media.
- **Professionalism.** A successful program is not the result of a haphazard process. Recruiting and retention must be approached as a responsible, carefully planned project. Minority students must be tracked, grades must be monitored, regular advisement must be scheduled, and statistics on all the processes of retention, graduation and placement must be kept. Outside funders should insist not only on the establishment of a logical, quantitative tracking system, but on benchmarks, standards and goals with which the tracking can be correlated. The donor should require the submission of a report including tracking data at least once a year, and the donor must be willing to check the data for accuracy. Diligent tracking and accurate statistics provide feedback necessary for improving the program and determining whether funding should be continued.

In regard to tracking, none of the six schools established as part of their program a system for tracking graduates over a period of years. In fairness to them, none had that aspect built into their budgets, and it would have taken significant staff time to accomplish properly. However, any future trial of this nature should include tracking of graduates in its budget to answer questions about job satisfaction, advancement and attrition.

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No one should assume that methods enlisted by the six experimental programs funded by Knight Foundation are the only ones that will work in recruiting and retaining minority students. Obviously, a school that can generate large scholarships and provide a full-time minority director will probably have more success than a school that cannot or does not.
But what are some of the other possibilities with fewer resources?

- A journalism program can pursue the establishment of meaningful, paid internships in the media or work opportunities within the university that will allow the minority student to test the waters of a mass media job while earning enough money to supplement the cost of school.
- A journalism program can relieve one faculty or staff member, preferably a minority, at least part time to direct a minority program that uses many of the recruiting and retention strategies successfully tried by the six experimental schools.
- The "coaches" program instituted so successfully at San Francisco State is available to virtually any university in any location.

A number of the other program features, such as field trips, professional seminars and minority student organizations, can be incorporated at little or no cost to a school. Although large scholarships are ideal, even relatively small scholarships confer prestige on the holder, while at the same time encouraging that student to perform at a high standard in order to get scholarship renewal.

One necessary element, no matter what the size of the program, will still be commitment. Is the head of the program involved and committed? Is the minority director energetic, empathic and committed?

Another necessary element is the inclusion of newspapers and possibly other news media in the overall effort. Newspapers need and want minority staff members. To prime the pump, they can provide scholarships, internships, mentors and job interviews. Journalism schools and departments interested in establishing minority programs should approach the newspapers in their area and suggest ways that the units can cooperate to achieve a common goal. News executives can also take the first step in volunteering to work with journalism programs in their area on recruitment, retention and placement activities.

Increasing minority enrollment significantly can be an achievable goal when university administrations, school or department administrations and news media work together. The experience of the six experimental programs has shown that effort and commitment by educators and press executives can tap a large pool of interested and qualified students to make the newspaper of the future more representative of the new America.

Appendix

Six Experimental Programs

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Student Search Agencies

Student Search Service: James E. Barber, Director, Rosedale Road 84D, Princeton, NJ 08541-0001. Phone: (609) 734-5112. Fax: (609) 734-5410. E-mail: sss@ECS.org. Student Search Service is a division of Educational Testing Service, which produces the SAT exam. Set-up charge: $175, then 22 cents for each student name and address. Lists provided on disk, tape or labels.

Educational Opportunity Service: Linda Banken, EOS coordinator, ACT, PO Box 168, Iowa City, IA 52243-0168. Phone: (319) 337-1350. Fax: (319) 337-1551. E-mail: Banken@act.org. EOS is a division of the American College Testing Program, which produces the ACT college entrance exam. Set-up charge: $200, then 20 cents for each student name and address. Lists provided on disk, tape or labels.

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Ralph L. Lowenstein

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At San Francisco State University's Bay Area Multicultural Media Academy, Dominick Muhammad, top, Ebonique Chapman, center, and Craig Perez learn about the Internet. Photo by Joanna Jhanda.

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